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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,572	09/15/2003	Susumu Maekawa	392.1816	7965
21171	7590	10/16/2006		
STAAS & HALSEY LLP SUITE 700 1201 NEW YORK AVENUE, N.W. WASHINGTON, DC 20005				
EXAMINER WALLING, MEAGAN S				
ART UNIT			PAPER NUMBER	
2863				

DATE MAILED: 10/16/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/661,572

Applicant(s)

MAEKAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Meagan S. Walling

Art Unit

2863

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 August 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22, 24 and 25 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22, 24 and 25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 15 September 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/18/06.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

1. Claim 24 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The claimed invention must produce a “useful, concrete, and tangible result.” *State Street*, 149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1601-02.

Claim 24 does not produce a tangible result. In order to overcome the rejection, claim language should be added that includes outputting, displaying, storing, or otherwise conveying the result of the previous method steps.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter that was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. Claim 25 was added in the 4/19/05 amendment and contains the limitations of “a threshold calculator” and “an analyzer”. Support for these limitations is not found in the specification.

Art Unit: 2863

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 1-22 and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

A claim using means plus function limitations without corresponding disclosure of specific structure or materials fails to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention.

Dossel, 115 F.3d at 946-47, 42 USPQ2d at 1884-85.

In claims 1 and 4, the “means” limitations are carried out by a processor and no particular structures in the drawings or disclosure perform the claimed function.

In claim 25, the “threshold calculator” and “analyzer” are not found in the disclosure or drawings. The functions claimed as being carried out by these devices are actually carried out by a processor.

Please see MPEP 2106.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 8/3/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that claim 24 is directed a process and is therefore statutory. However, *State Street* (149 F.3d at 1373, 47 USPQ2d at 1601-02) found that the claimed invention must produce a concrete, useful, and tangible result. Claim 24 does not produce a tangible result.

Art Unit: 2863

The final step in the body of claim 24 is “comparing the load state value of the current machining cycle with the moving variable threshold to determine a condition of the tool”. This is not a tangible result. The condition has not been outputted, displayed, or saved so that it can be used. There is no tangible product because the condition of the tool has been determined, but it remains inside the processor and cannot be used. Therefore, a step must be added that includes outputting, displaying, storing, or otherwise conveying the result of the previous method steps.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Meagan S. Walling whose telephone number is (571) 272-2283.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, John Barlow can be reached on (571) 272-2269. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

msw



MICHAEL NGHIEM
PRIMARY EXAMINER